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**THE BEQUEST OF  
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**1898-1925**

NATURALISM  
IN  
THE RECENT GERMAN DRAMA

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO  
GERHART HAUPTMANN

BY  
ALFRED STOECKIUS, A. M.

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, IN THE FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY,  
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# NATURALISM IN THE GERMAN DRAMA.

## CHAPTER I.

### NATURALISM IN GENERAL.

#### § 1. *Definition of Naturalism.*

Gerhart Hauptmann is regarded to-day as one of the foremost living dramatists. As is generally known, he has been carried along by the naturalistic movement which began to invade Germany in the beginning of the eighties of the nineteenth century, after it had already been at work for some fifteen or twenty years in France and Russia and had also penetrated Scandinavia.

What is naturalism? As the word is often used interchangeably with realism, not a little confusion has arisen. The Greeks, Shakspere, and Goethe were realists. Were they therefore naturalists in the modern sense? To answer this question we must first find what is meant by "nature" in the word "naturalism." Friedrich Kirchner<sup>1</sup> has pointed out the different significations of "nature" in this connection.

"Nature" may first be conceived as in contrast with culture. The latter had in the eighteenth century, for instance, estranged man from nature to such a degree that men like Rousseau and Schiller gave vent to their feeling in the cry: Let us return to nature! This "Naturschwärmerei," however, is not the essential characteristic of modern naturalism.

A second contrast exists between nature and character. Man should live in harmony with nature. The laws of ethics should be in harmony with the inevitable laws of nature, since man is evidently a link in the chain of natural phenomena and since the laws of our reason agree with the laws of nature. "Nature" in this case is after all an abstraction created by the human mind. What we call "nature" here,

<sup>1</sup> In *Gründdeutschland. Ein Streifzug durch die jüngste deutsche Dichtung.* Wien und Leipzig. 1893. Cf. especially pp. 47-58.

according to which we are to live and act, is a product of our reason, an abstraction, which we believe to be different from our individual feelings. But this idealization of nature is also not the conception that we find in the modern naturalists. For them nature is simply common reality.

A third contrast exists between nature and the individual. The former is the macrocosm, the latter the microcosm. From this conception arises the pantheistic worship of nature. This is also not our modern conception of naturalism.

In the fourth place, nature may be conceived as in contrast with spirit, especially the spirit of man. As such, it is the sum of all mechanical laws and forces. Everything is reduced to the motion of atoms and molecules. Man is a legitimate product of scientifically known factors. This view of naturalism, or materialism, is held by most of the modern naturalists.

The fifth and last contrast exists between nature and art. The artist, even the highest idealist, must come in contact with nature; he must take his models from it. But for the genuine artist, nature, or common reality, is the material for his art, whereas the naturalist finds his highest task in imitating and reproducing it exactly as he sees it.

As the word "nature" applies to the naturalists only in the fourth and fifth senses, we may define naturalism as an attempt to imitate and reproduce nature, or common reality; *i. e.*, nature as it presents itself to the scientist or the ordinary man.

Here we find no qualitative distinction between art and nature, and herein lies the great difference between both realism and idealism on the one hand and naturalism on the other.<sup>1</sup>

Realism, in the artistic sense, is distinguished from naturalism in that the realist holds that a work of art must start from nature, must be rooted in reality, yet must not be a copy of common reality, but must deepen and intensify it. In this sense the Greeks, Shakspeare, and Goethe are realists.

<sup>1</sup> On the difference between naturalism and realism cf. also A. Bartels: *Die deutsche Dichtung der Gegenwart*. Leipzig. 1897. Pp. 89-90.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also C. E. Geucke: *Kunst und Naturalismus*. Dresden. 1892; also *Sphinx* 14, pp. 280-1, article on Real- und Ideal-Naturalismus.

Idealism, in the artistic sense, is distinguished from naturalism in that the idealist holds that nature, or common reality, must be not so much deepened and intensified as transformed. In this sense Schiller is an idealist. But there is really no essential distinction between artistic realism and artistic idealism.<sup>1</sup> The realist lays more stress upon the reality which must form the basis of a work of art, the idealist lays more stress upon the subjective and creative faculty of the artist. Whether reality is deepened and intensified or whether it is transformed—in either case the creative side of the production is recognized. In both cases nature, or common reality, is the material for the artist; yet in both cases the work of art is something distinct from nature, something achieved by artistic productivity, something that has its own existence and its own reality. For the naturalist, on the other hand, "material," or "subject matter," i. e., something that has to be worked upon, does not exist. According to him there is no qualitative distinction between nature and art, because he does not believe in an artistic reality, apart from common nature. For him a work of art is only a copy of nature which is judged as good in proportion as it is exact and faithful. The naturalist describes; the genuine artist, whether he be idealist or realist, creates.

In naturalism, as above defined, there are also two attitudes possible, an active and a passive attitude. In the former case the naturalist describes and analyzes common reality, as Zola does, for instance. In the latter case he yields to the influences of reality, he is impressed by it; here we get impressionism and "Kleinmalerei," which is the special characteristic of German naturalism.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Schiller's preface to "Die Braut von Messina" in Goedeke's *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, Vierzehnter Theil, pp. 3-12. Schiller says here that a work of art should be ideal and yet in its deepest sense real (p. 5). Cf. also: A. Lasson: *Realismus und Naturalismus in der Kunst*. Philosophische Vorträge, Neue Folge, Heft 22-23. Leipzig. 1892. Pp. 10 seq.

§ 2. *Origin of Naturalism.*

If we desire to know the origins of the modern naturalistic movement we must go back to Taine.<sup>1</sup> He forms the bridge between science and literature. As he was endowed with a rare combination of scientific and literary qualities, he applied to literature the new scientific methods suggested by the evolutionary view of the world. Zola closely followed Taine, at least from the theoretical point of view; while from the practical point of view, he followed Balzac.<sup>2</sup> His "Œuvres critiques"<sup>3</sup> stand in exactly the same relation of dependence to the "Philosophie de l'art" of the one as his "Rougon-Macquart" cycle to the "Comédie humaine" of the other. Neither work would have been written without these predecessors. But Zola himself finds the sources of modern naturalism even earlier. He considers it as the continuation of the scientific, illuminative and rationalistic spirit, the roots of which lie in the eighteenth century, when Diderot was its foremost representative. He considers naturalism as the continuation of that French materialism, sensualism, and rationalism which led to the French revolution. In French romanticism, beginning with Victor Hugo, he sees only a momentary interruption of the progress of this naturalistic spirit of Diderot. With Balzac and Stendhal the naturalistic spirit of the eighteenth century again gains the upper hand.<sup>4</sup>

Zola calls Diderot "the forefather of our modern positivists": "Avec Diderot qui est l'ancêtre de nos positivistes d'aujourd'hui, naissent les méthodes d'observation et d'expérimentation

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Zola's article on Taine in "Mes Haines." Paris. 1880. Pp. 201-232.

<sup>2</sup> See Zola's "Les Romanciers naturalistes," Paris. 1881; essay on Balzac, pp. 1-73. Zola there calls Balzac "le premier affirmé l'action décisive du milieu sur le personnage, qu'il ait porté dans le roman les méthodes d'observation et d'expérimentation" (p. 73).

<sup>3</sup> Mes Haines. Paris. 1880. Le naturalisme au théâtre. Paris. 1881. Une campagne. Paris. 1882. Documents littéraires. Paris. 1882. Les Romanciers naturalistes. Paris. 1881. Le Roman expérimental. Paris. 1887.

<sup>4</sup> These thoughts are developed in "Le Roman expérimental," pp. 195 seq.

appliquées à la littérature."<sup>1</sup> . . . "Stendhal fut le premier fils de Diderot."<sup>2</sup> . . . "Le positiviste Diderot, malgré ses contradictions, est le véritable aïeul des naturalistes, car il a réclamé le premier la vérité exacte au théâtre et dans le roman."<sup>3</sup>

### § 3. *Causes of Naturalism.*

All this may be true to a certain extent, but when we consider the causes of the modern naturalistic movement we cannot say that Diderot himself influenced it in any way. The causes belong to the nineteenth century. They are to be found in the scientific,<sup>4</sup> practical spirit and in the socialistic tendencies,<sup>5</sup> which characterize the nineteenth century. In Germany this new spirit made itself felt, especially in the third decade, as a reaction against romanticism, "Naturphilosophie," mediævalism, despotism and aristocratism. These tendencies were replaced by a practical, sober, and scientific spirit. The years after 1830 were marked by discoveries and technical inventions. But the mightiest impulse for science came from the startling discoveries of Darwin and Haeckel. Hand in hand with this scientific progress went the progress of social conditions. This fact is not strange, since with the expansion of science the masses became more enlightened and demanded their rights. The socialistic spirit determined in its turn the spiritual and scientific currents of the time. The socialistic spirit engenders necessarily utilitarianism and a mechanical view of the world; for the highest questions of the socialist are questions of economics and industrialism. This utilitarian spirit, this mechanical view of the world, was inimical to all higher conceptions of science, religion, philosophy, art and literature. Science became altogether experimental, religion became positivism, philosophy became materialism,

<sup>1</sup> Une campagne. Paris. 1882; article "Naturalisme," p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. A. E. Schönbach: Ueber Lesen und Bildung. 5. Aufl. Graz. 1897. Pp. 216-19.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 221-23. On these two causes cf. also H. Fürst: Die neuen Ideale. Dresden und Leipzig. 1893. P. vii and pp. 1-16.



and art and literature were treated in the spirit of scientific observation. Intuition and imagination were banished as far as possible from the sphere of art and literature. This was undoubtedly a healthy reaction against the romanticism of the first decades of the nineteenth century; but, like every reactionary movement, it went too far in the opposite direction.

#### § 4. *Characteristics of Naturalism.*

We come now to a consideration of the characteristics of naturalism. I have made above a distinction between an active and a passive attitude in naturalism. Let us first consider the former kind of naturalism, viz., that of Zola. Zola defines naturalism as follows:

"Le naturalisme, c'est le retour à la nature, c'est cette opération que les savants ont faite le jour où ils se sont avisés de partir de l'étude des corps et des phénomènes, de se baser sur l'expérience, de procéder par l'analyse. Le naturalisme, dans les lettres, c'est également le retour à la nature et à l'homme, l'observation directe, l'anatomie exacte, l'acceptation et la peinture de ce qui est."<sup>1</sup> In another passage he says: "Aujourd'hui, la qualité maîtresse du romancier est le sens du réel." . . . "Le sens du réel, c'est de sentir la nature et de la rendre telle qu'elle est."<sup>2</sup>

The naturalist, as we see, trusts in nothing but his senses and what he can logically infer from their evidence. Hence there exists for him only a common reality. He does not believe in a reality created by the artist by means of intuition and imagination—in other words, an artistic reality. Consequently, in the warfare between the old art and naturalism, we find intuition and imagination pitted against scientific observation and exact analysis.

We shall first consider the naturalism of Zola in its formal aspect. He says: "Il faut que l'anarchie littéraire finisse, il faut qu'un état solide soit fondé."<sup>3</sup> Now it is true that if we

<sup>1</sup> See *Le Roman expérimental*, pp. 114-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> This passage is quoted by A. Holz in: *Die Kunst. Ihr Wesen und ihre Gesetze*. Berlin. 1891. P. 136.

consider intuition the chief element in the production of art and poetry, we cannot have any fixed laws as we have in science. But a great work of art does not conform to any established scientific laws. It creates new laws. Art, in its highest sense, cannot be taught. The attempt to reduce art and poetry to some fundamental scientific laws is just as absurd as to found schools for the teaching of poetry. The one attempt will fail as well as the other. The whole tendency leads to a mechanical view of art and to an obliteration of the distinction between nature and art.

According to Zola a work of art is a piece of nature seen through a temperament.<sup>1</sup> But is a piece of nature not also seen through a temperament apart from all artistic considerations? How else can we know nature if there is not at least some subjectivity displayed in the perception of it? What then is the difference between a piece of nature as seen from the standpoint of art and a piece of nature as seen by the ordinary inartistic man? There cannot be any distinction according to this definition. The ordinary inartistic man may have just as much "temperament" as the artist. The whole argument ends in obliterating the distinction between art and nature.

If art must become identical with nature, then we cannot speak of any distinctive principles of art. The principles of art according to such a theory would be identical with the principles of natural science. In attempting to subordinate art to nature in this way, the naturalists mistake the basis for the structure.<sup>2</sup> A work of art should be firmly rooted in nature, in reality, but it should be more than nature and ordinary reality. It should be nature deepened and intensified by the artist. A work of art, as we have said before, should be po-

<sup>1</sup>"Il est certain qu'une oeuvre ne sera jamais qu'un coin de la nature vu à travers un tempérament"; *Le roman expérimental*, p. III.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. S. H. Butcher: *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Arts*. London. 1898. 2d ed., p. 184. Also A. Lasson: *Realismus und Naturalismus in der Kunst*. Philosophische Vorträge, Neue Folge, Heft 22-23. Leipzig. 1892. Pp. 8-9.

tentiated nature and a qualitatively higher reality.<sup>1</sup> The artist should draw out all the possibilities from nature and not be satisfied with imitating and reproducing it. Art implies effort, discrimination and concentration upon the essential truths of nature. The fundamental principles of art have not been revolutionized by the naturalists, they have simply been ignored. But a work of literature, if it lacks the artistic element, cannot live. It is the artistic element that gives it its permanence, its depth and universality, its genuinely and purely human truth.

It may be true that naturalism is to a certain extent an art when the naturalists strive to imitate reality in its finest nuances and moods (*Stimmungen*). Everybody can imitate nature, but not everybody can see and feel it as the naturalist does. We may even speak of an idealism in this naturalistic art. The naturalist strives to imitate and reproduce nature with the fullest exactness. But that is an ideal as unrealizable as that of the highest idealist. He will never bring his art to such a perfection that his model in the real world and his own work will be exactly alike.<sup>2</sup> He can only approach an identity of model and work. The more accurately and sharply he strives to see, the finer the nuances in the object will become for him. But whether there is any genuine art in this extraordinarily fine observation is another question. . . This infinitesimal difference between a naturalistic work of art and a natural object as seen by the ordinary man is after all only a quantitative and not a qualitative difference. But where does the qualitative difference between art and nature come in? Ever since the times of Aristotle, art has been considered as qualitatively different from nature. Art is not nature. In Zola, as well as in the other naturalists, we find this continual confusion of art and nature.

It was only natural that, with the different way of looking at things brought about by modern science and socialism, lit-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Aristotle: *Poetics*. Ch. 9, 17, 25. Lessing: *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, 89-94. G. Freytag: *Technik des Dramas*. Leipzig. 1890. 6. Aufl., Kap. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. E. Schönbach: *Ueber Lesen und Bildung*. Graz. 1897. Pp. 244-7.

erature was also affected. It is not difficult to discern the inner connection between the scientific spirit and socialism, and naturalistic literature. There is a tendency in socialism to create a common level for all literary workers ("il faut que l'anarchie littéraire finisse"), and that, according to the socialists and the writers influenced by the socialistic spirit, ought to be the level of natural science. According to them there should be no individual intuitions expressed by extraordinary men. They hold that natural science with its general laws will be able to level these distinctions in literature.

But science has not merely been adopted in its formal aspect; it has also been adopted in its material aspect. The determining factors of the new scientific view of the world have also become the determining factors of the new naturalistic literature. These are (1) the law of heredity, (2) determinism, (3) the emphasis laid upon the doctrine of the milieu, (4) the doctrine that man is really an animal, (5) the doctrine that man is only a link in the chain of social phenomena.<sup>1</sup> Man is regarded as the product of the milieu, or environment of the individual, subject to the mechanical laws of the universe. We are told that there is no personal initiative in man; that there are no extraordinary personalities, no individualities; that everybody should be brought to the level of the common man as the product of the milieu. Even men like Napoleon are to be explained from the condition of the milieu.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. here K. Goldmann: *Die Sünden des Naturalismus*. Berlin. 1891. Pp. 21-45. F. Kirchner: *Gründesdeutschland*. Wien und Leipzig. 1893. Pp. 58-76. W. Bölsche: *Die naturwissenschaftlichen Grundlagen der Poesie*. Leipzig. 1887. P. Mahn: *Gerhart Hauptmann und der Naturalismus*. Berlin. 1894. Pp. 5-6. S. Schultze: *Der Zeitgeist der modernen Litteratur Europas*. Halle a. S. 1895. Pp. 9-15.

## CHAPTER II.

### NATURALISM IN GERMANY.

#### § 1. *Transition of Naturalism to Germany.*

While Zola's literary efforts in naturalism date back to 1866, the naturalistic spirit in Germany did not begin to assert itself until after 1880. We are not particularly concerned here with the literary reforms which the two brothers, Julius and Heinrich Hart,<sup>1</sup> attempted on critical lines, beginning in 1882. These two young men were realists, not naturalists. They did not at all share Zola's idea that literature should be subordinate to scientific analysis, and that it should describe and depict nothing but the conditions of the milieu. Theirs was an attempt to rejuvenate German literature on its own lines. They tried to bring literature again into touch with the national spirit.

About 1885, a few years after they had started their agitation, there began to assert itself with more visible success a literary movement in line with the spirit of socialism and with social democracy. This latter political party had risen to prominence in Germany in the seventies. As the bourgeoisie degenerated under the influence of French money paid as war indemnity, social democracy acquired strength, and hence a new literature developed—a literature that concerned itself chiefly with the social conditions of the lower classes.

This new literary movement must be called naturalistic in distinction from the realistic agitation of the Harts, at least in so far as the element of socialism is contained in it. It made its début in 1885 with an anthology of lyrical poetry, entitled "Moderne Dichtercharaktere." The chief characteristic of this poetry is its glorification of the fourth estate.

<sup>1</sup>Julius Hart was born in 1859 at Münster, Heinrich in 1855 at Wesel. Their chief critical works are: *Kritische Waffengänge*. Leipzig. 1882-84, and *Kritisches Jahrbuch*. Hamburg. 1889-90.

This socialistic poetry was superseded by the naturalistic novel. Here the influence of Zola is clearly discernible. Michael Conrad,<sup>1</sup> of Munich, was one of the most prominent novelists who were influenced in this direction. Under this influence the novel became minutely descriptive. Reproductions of the milieu took the place of narrative. Scientific observation and analysis were substituted for intuition and imagination.

Thus far we have discussed that active side of naturalism which finds its chief expression in the work of Zola. We come now to the consideration of the other side of naturalism, which finds its chief expression in Holz<sup>2</sup> and Schlaf,<sup>3</sup> *i. e.*, the passive side. About 1887, while the influence of the French naturalistic novel still continued, two young German poets, Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf, the former of whom belonged to the clique of the lyrical poets of 1885, began to carry the naturalistic method to excess. For this reason they are called "consistent realists" (*konsequente Realisten*).<sup>4</sup> While they based their work upon the same view of the world that Zola held, and while their naturalism contained the same elements as his, they went a step further, and by adding new elements materially changed the aspect of the whole.

The changes which they made were concerned particularly with an attempt to be more consistent than Zola. We find changes:

1. In the technic.
2. In the stress laid upon the influence of objective nature over the subjectivity of the poet.
3. In "Kleinmalerei" and "Stimmungsmalerei."

Zola's novels, although they depict minutely the general conditions and the milieu, are at any rate real novels; they do not lack the epic movement. He retains the established tech-

<sup>1</sup> Born 1846. His best novels are: *Totentanz der Liebe*, 1884, and *Was die Isar rauscht*, 1887.

<sup>2</sup> Born in 1863, at Rastenberg in Eastern Prussia.

<sup>3</sup> Born in 1862 at Querfurt.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the dedication in G. Hauptmann's *Vor Sonnenaufgang*, 8. Aufl., Berlin. 1889.

✓ nic of the novel; he has no intention of changing the laws of epic literature or of substituting something new for the novel. He is, rather, concerned about the application of scientific analysis to the treatment of the subject matter in its internal aspect. He is a born novelist guided by the modern scientific spirit. In spite of the portrayals of the milieu, we find consecutiveness in Zola's novels; while in those of Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf we find a lack of consecutive development.<sup>1</sup>

✓ What Holz and Schlaf really give us is pictures, and when they string them together we have a series of pictures. We see that these two German naturalists went much farther than Zola. All recounting of events, all narrative—so their theory seems to say—should be banished from the novel, since succeeding events cannot be carefully and minutely observed at once in their total impression. Naturalistic literature, however, as they say, should be an imitation and reproduction of reality exactly as it is seen and observed at one given moment. Photographic exactness, they tell us, should be aimed at.<sup>2</sup>

The German naturalists conscientiously followed Zola's dictum: A work of art is a piece of nature seen through a temperament. They saw indeed that it would be absurd to eliminate the personal element altogether from the production of a work of art; but they were very anxious to reduce this personal element to a minimum. The veil that hinders us from seeing an object exactly as it is, should be, according to their theory, as thin as possible. We cannot, to be sure, get out of our own skins and identify ourselves with the object, but our attitude

✓ <sup>1</sup>Cf. the two distinguishing modern technical phrases "*Nacheinander*" and "*Nebeneinander*."

<sup>2</sup>These thoughts are developed by Arno Holz in his book: *Die Kunst. Ihr Wesen und ihre Gesetze*. Berlin. 1891. Holz has set up there the following thesis: "Die Kunst hat die Tendenz, wieder die Natur zu sein. Sie wird sie nach Massgabe ihrer jeweiligen Reproduktionsbedingungen und deren Handhabung" (p. 117). Cf. also: Arno Holz: *Socialaristokraten*. Rudolstadt & Leipzig. 1896. Preface, pp. 3-7; also their imaginative works, such as *Familie Selicke*. Berlin. 1892; and *Papa Hamlet*. Leipzig. 1889. The latter was published under the pseudonym of Bj. P. Holmsen.

towards it should be as impersonal and passive as possible. Now if we reduce as far as possible that which constitutes our personality, the residuum will be a general vague feeling which the German calls "Stimmung." In this way, it seems to me, we have to explain the transition from Zola's objective naturalism to the impressionism of Holz and Schlaf. The "Stimmung" is that part in our personality which is the most impersonal, and the man who has reduced his subjectivity to that point will find himself in the most receptive attitude. The works of these naturalists are produced in that attitude, in that spirit.

We sometimes wonder why the naturalist pays as much attention to the smallest details as to the more important elements. It is because he is in an attitude in which he cannot and will not discern and select. Discernment and selection would claim an activity of his personality which he wishes to avoid. He will let nothing personal interfere between his objects and himself. Importance or unimportance would imply a personal relation. He wishes to report carefully and faithfully the impression he receives in a certain "Stimmung." This must necessarily tend to become miniature painting (Kleinmalerei), because anything great and important would disturb the passive attitude, and the subjectivity of the artist would react against such a disturbance.<sup>1</sup>

The three points which I have mentioned thus far as the characteristics which distinguish German naturalism from the naturalism of Zola may nevertheless rightly be inferred from the philosophy which Zola holds; *i. e.*, from the scientific and socialistic spirit of the nineteenth century, which, as I have tried to show, must be considered as the cause of literary naturalism. These German naturalists have only tried to be more consistent than Zola. They have become impressionists and made themselves *tabula rasa*, so to speak, in order to report as exactly as possible the minutest details of the external world.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Richard M. Meyer: *Litteraturgeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*. Berlin. 1900. P. 820, also pp. 874-5.



But there is also another element in this same impressionism, which cannot be accounted for only by the materialistic and socialistic spirit of our age. We have therefore to search for an additional cause determining our modern thought and literature. Anton E. Schönbach<sup>1</sup> and many others understand by this additional cause our modern nervousness. But it seems to me that this term is entirely too narrow. The cause may more appropriately be designated by the term "decadence." By decadence I understand the degenerative tendencies of our modern culture as contrasted with the naïveté and naturalness of classical antiquity.<sup>2</sup> The passive mood, the lack of will power, the sentimentalism and "Stimmungstänkelei" which form characteristic elements of impressionistic naturalism are to a large extent caused by our modern decadence, by the degenerative tendencies of our modern culture which Nietzsche denounced so fiercely.<sup>3</sup> Morbidity, over-refinement of culture, lack of will power—these are just as much signs of our age as the materialistic and socialistic spirit, and Hauptmann and such German naturalists as Holz and Schlaf reflect both these tendencies.

Let us try to find the psychological basis of this element of decadence with special reference to German naturalism. As the most personal element in man is will, the naturalists try to suppress everything in the direction of will because it mars objectivity. They try to suppress as far as possible the subjective element. In feeling severed from will they find the least subjective element. Will individualizes. Feeling severed from will is general and vague. A poet with a preponderance of will will be very subjective and personal. Ibsen is such a strongly individualistic poet; he can therefore not

<sup>1</sup>*Op. cit.*, pp. 219-21.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Schiller: *Sämtliche Schriften. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, 10. Theil: "Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung," especially pp. 472 seq.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. his *Werke*. Leipzig. 1894, Bd. VIII: *Der Fall Wagner*, pp. 1-48, Nietzsche contra Wagner, pp. 103-206, *Der Wille zur Macht I.*, pp. 213-315, also Bd. VII: *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* and *Zur Genealogie der Moral*.

be counted among the naturalists. [On the other hand, a poet with a preponderance of feeling and a lack of will will be very objective, at least in so far as he does not react upon impressions from outside.] The naturalists belong to this latter class. They receive their impressions without individually and personally reacting upon them. As they lack the will power that discerns and segregates the multitude of objects causing their impression, they are apt to lose themselves in the portrayal of small and uninteresting details.

[It may be seen, therefore, that naturalism as it developed in Germany is not so very different from what Schiller in his famous essay "Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung" calls sentimentalism. Far from being too realistic, it does not sufficiently take root in reality; it only touches the surface of objective reality. The peculiarity of this naturalism is that its effect is slightly emotional. A simple passive mood, without the discernment of intellect and without the impelling force of will, will never be able to produce the highest kind of art, an art that appeals to the personality of man in its entirety.]

Besides this, do the German naturalists, by their impressionism, get any nearer to objective truth than Zola? By no means. They fix their attention upon momentary conditions. These conditions are objective, to be sure, but as they are not lasting they possess no real objectivity. They depend upon the "Stimmung" of the poet. It is true that the "Stimmung" is caused immediately by the objects, but we cannot think of it as separate from the subjectivity of the poet. The naturalists have so consistently carried out their objectivism that it gets dangerously close to subjectivism. Extremes meet. As everything moves in a circle there is only a small step from one extreme to its opposite. This close and faithful imitation and reproduction of reality when carried to such an extreme becomes subjectivism. A reality that is so delicate, airy, and fleeting that we cannot retain it, does not possess stability and objective truth. ✓

This explains the strange combination of this naturalism with high lyrical gifts which we find among the naturalists. It might seem strange that a poet like Arno Holz, who had

already made himself famous by a book of songs revealing high lyrical talents, could hit upon the theory that art is the exact imitation of reality. We find in many of these naturalists a continual shifting between lyrical poetry and naturalism.<sup>1</sup> The "Stimmungsbild" is the connecting link between them. A "Stimmungsbild" may be viewed from an objective and from a subjective side. The "Stimmung" is caused immediately by the objects; but it is at the same time essentially a subjective impression, since it is only momentary and fleeting, owing to the fact that there is no stability in the object. Here is to be found the point of contact between lyricism and extreme naturalism, or "consistent realism." A naturalism of that kind is neither realism, since there is no stability in the object, nor idealism, since there is no stability in the subject. It is altogether too soft, lyrical, and fleeting to take hold of reality in its innermost kernel. Chiefly in this fact lies the element of decadence.

## § 2. *Distinguishing Characteristics of German Naturalism in Comparison with Classical Art.*

This new literary movement is not merely naturalistic in the narrower sense; it is intensely modern.<sup>2</sup> It contains within itself all the peculiarities and tendencies and diseases of our time.<sup>3</sup> On this account, a new word has been coined: "Die Moderne" in contrast to "Die Antike." It is for this reason that we may contrast naturalism, as a specifically modern art, with classical art.

The main distinction between naturalism and classical art is the absence of the plastic element in the former. Greek art was plastic; modern naturalistic art is chiefly musical, impressionistic.

Greek art required the activity of the senses, it required the personal activity of the beholder; modern naturalistic art re-

<sup>1</sup>Cf. M. Lorenz: *Die Litteratur am Jahrhundert-Ende*. Stuttgart. 1900. Pp. 9 and 16 seq.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. E. Ziel: *Das Prinzip des Modernen in der heutigen deutschen Dichtung*. München. 1895, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Siegmar Schultze: *op. cit.*, pp. 16-35.

quires impressibility of soul, emotion. The Greek was a realist. He gave himself with naïve trust to the external world; he loved it. The modern naturalist ~~has altogether retired~~ into himself, he has no feeling for the external world, he looks upon it with distrust, he hates it. Hence the pessimism among the naturalists. It is no wonder if many of them see only the ugly sides of the world. How can we expect them to know the real world when they apply themselves to it with such an attitude? The modern man<sup>1</sup> has covered the external world with the veil of his subjectivity and therefore objects appeal to his senses only in contours and outlines. They have no more solidity for him than sound; and what else does sensual perception mean for the modern naturalists, such as Holz, Schlaf and Hauptmann, but perception and causation of tone (Tonwahrnehmung und Tonerregung)?<sup>2</sup> The external world consists to him of tones. Every object has a certain tone, a certain color of sound (Klangfarbe) for him. The modern naturalist is a "Stimmungsmensch." He hears with his whole being; he is all ear in the literal sense. The naturalists attempt to describe the world as it is. But what do they know of the external world? They only give us tone-color and the delineation of moods.

Sight individualizes and concentrates, hearing generalizes and renders abstract. In the former case we get the plastic arts; in the latter the musical arts. For one who only hears everything becomes symbolic. The Christian religion has turned our thoughts and minds towards the invisible. For the Greek everything had to be visible and tangible. If this is true (and hardly any one will deny it), some change in our sensuous constitution must have occurred; our senses must have been affected in some way. We cannot possess any longer as keen a perception of and feeling for reality as the Greek possessed. Our plastic sensibilities have been deadened. We have lost the power of individualization and concentration

<sup>1</sup> The term "modern man" may seem too general; but I think I am justified in using it in consideration of the fact that naturalism is the dominant tendency in modern culture.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. on this whole argument Schiller, *op. cit.*, also Nietzsche, *op. cit.*

upon the real things of the world. Consequently we classify, we generalize, we philosophize. When we see a man to-day he suggests to us all men of his class. That is because we do not see his distinguishing traits. We see nothing in the individual objects; they only suggest to us something.

In the course of centuries the world has lost its beauty for us in proportion as our sight has been blunted by religious and ascetic tendencies which have sought to divert us as much as possible from the corporeal and anthropomorphic and plastic. As has been said above, religion attempted the task of suppressing as far as possible the assertion of the senses. It concealed and obscured for man the visual world. In this way his plastic sensibilities were gradually stunted;<sup>1</sup> but as the sensuous impulse had to find vent in some way, there was developed an extraordinary fine and delicate sense of hearing; since sound is invisible and intangible, the sense of hearing is nearest akin to the spiritual nature of man. In this way the art of music, with all its kindred arts, such as lyricism,<sup>2</sup> has been developed under the influence of the Christian religion, to an unthought-of and astonishing extent. This is one reason why our modern culture is in its innermost kernel musical, and why poetry is preëminently so. This fact also explains why mathematics and architecture have developed so highly under our modern civilization because mathematics, architecture,<sup>3</sup> and music are all built upon the same fundamental laws of harmony.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Heinrich Driesmans: *Die plastische Kraft in Kunst, Wissenschaft und Leben*. Leipzig. 1898. Pp. 7 seq.

<sup>2</sup> I do not deny that there were here and there some great lyric poets in Greece, such as Pindar, for instance, but still it cannot be said that the average Greek was subjective and impressionistic as the average man to-day is, being the product of idealism and religion. It is this subjectivism and impressionism which further the growth of lyricism, and everybody will admit that these are qualities absent in Greek character.

<sup>3</sup> By regarding architecture as an essentially modern product I may seem to contradict my former statement that defectiveness of sight is a chief characteristic of our times. But there is no real contradiction in this. No sight is required for architecture, a work of architecture is geometrically thought out, in architecture we have nothing but geometrical lines and planes, no plastic sensibilities are required to produce or behold a work of architecture.

Thus far, we have discussed the contrast between the plastic and the musical element in art. The second distinction between classical art and naturalism lies in the fact that Greek art is individualistic, whereas modern art strives to produce total effects. Consequently naturalism lacks the idea of personality which was emphasized so much by Herder and Goethe. Instead of the harmonious combination of man's faculties we have the separation of the emotional from the other elements of man. A work of art as conceived by Herder and Goethe should move the heart as the centre of personality, as the root of all faculties.<sup>1</sup> Modern culture has destroyed this harmony of man's personality. The scientist exalts intellect over will and feeling; the moralist exalts will at the expense of feeling and intellect; the poet exalts passive moods at the expense of intellect and will. In naturalistic art the purely emotional or lyrical element suppresses the activity of intellect and will. The effect of naturalistic art is like that of music—a pure soul effect. Everything is “soul,” “Hauch,” derived from the impression made by a group of objects in nature. The modern naturalist depicts and slightly touches, the Greek penetrated and created. Naturalism lacks formative power, it lacks solidity and strength. What the modern poet as the child of a highly developed culture has gained in fineness and delicacy he has lost in individual force of creation, in depth and originality.

<sup>1</sup>In regard to Herder cf. Eugen Kühnemann: Herder's Persönlichkeit in seiner Weltanschauung. Berlin. 1893. Pp. 20 seq., pp. 71 seq., pp. 171, 206, etc. Cf. also his Viertes kritisches Wäldchen.

## CHAPTER III.

### APPLICATION OF NATURALISM TO DRAMATIC ART.

#### § 1. *Dramaturgic Defects Arising from Hauptmann's Mechanical Conception of Life and Man.*

We have now analyzed the phenomena of naturalism, first in the land of its origin, then in Germany as it developed under Holz and Schlaf. We have compared this German naturalism with Zola's naturalism and found in it some additional elements which cannot be usually accounted for fully by the causes suggested for the naturalistic movement. Modern morbid tendencies, such as Nietzsche attacked and which may be designated by the general term "decadence," have also contributed to the peculiar development of naturalism as we find it in Germany.

Not very long after Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf had made their first appearance, there came to the front rank under their influence another man, through whom naturalism in Germany has become one of the universally recognized factors in our modern literary thought: Gerhart Hauptmann.<sup>1</sup> He himself has acknowledged his indebtedness to Holz and Schlaf, as may be seen from the dedication of his first drama "Vor Sonnenaufgang."<sup>2</sup> But nevertheless he was the first to apply their naturalistic principles to the regular drama.<sup>3</sup> He may therefore be regarded as the originator of the naturalistic drama. As we now know the principles of naturalism, the

<sup>1</sup>For biographical data see P. Schlenther: Gerhart Hauptmann. Sein Lebensgang und seine Dichtung. Vierte Aufl. Berlin. 1898.

<sup>2</sup>It runs as follows: "Bjarne P. Holmsen [pseudonym of Holz and Schlaf], dem konsequentesten Realisten von 'Papa Hamlet,' in freudiger Anerkennung der durch sein Buch empfangenen entscheidenden Anregung." G. Hauptmann: "Vor Sonnenaufgang." 8. Aufl. Berlin. 1889.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. A. Bartels: G. Hauptmann. Weimar. 1897. Pp. 36-37.

next question that concerns us is: How far are these naturalistic principles applicable to the drama? Is it possible that they harmonize with the fundamental principles of dramatic art as laid down by Aristotle and Lessing? If the naturalistic dramatist has been compelled to ignore or to reject the latter, has he been able to substitute new dramatic principles for them?

In accordance with the different elements which we have found in naturalism, we may distinguish in Hauptmann's dramas a materialistic or mechanical, a socialistic and a lyrico-musical element. We shall consider first the dramaturgic defects arising from his mechanical conception of life and man, and we shall show first the influence of this conception upon the technic of the drama.

The classical technic of the drama is based upon the fundamental fact of all dramatic art: namely, that it is illusion. But Hauptmann, as a naturalist, wishes to destroy this illusion. Dramatic art, like all art—so he holds—should give the immediate impression of reality. He tries therefore to imitate and reproduce reality as exactly as possible. Consequently, whenever there is a conflict between dramatic technic and this exact imitation of reality he will naturally disregard the former.

On this account the naturalistic dramatist reproduces only conditions and not actions, because an action cannot be imitated and reproduced on the stage as it is in real life. An action evades our observation. We can see only the different states or conditions into which it may be broken up. Consequently, we have no acting personalities in the naturalistic drama. An action cannot be retained. By an action the "Stimmung" would be destroyed, for it would immediately awaken in us the consciousness that we are in the theatre and not in the real world. The illusory and theatrical would come to our consciousness and our feeling of reality (Wirklichkeitsstimmung) would be destroyed. The naturalistic dramatist makes every possible effort to avoid the consciousness of illusion.<sup>1</sup> Here we see the vast difference between the trag-

<sup>1</sup>See on this point Arno Holz: *Socialaristokraten*. Rudolstadt und Leipzig. 1896. Pp. 3-7 (preface).



edies of the Greeks and Schiller on the one hand, and the naturalistic drama on the other. Schiller intentionally and consciously employs every theatrical convention in order to cause artistic illusion.<sup>1</sup>

The method of Ibsen is also quite different from that of Hauptmann, although it is true that in Ibsen's dramas also we do not find any development of action and characters. When the drama starts, the material is so combustible that the least spark from outside enkindles the whole mass.<sup>2</sup> Ibsen does not develop the tragic conflict in the course of the drama; his drama starts with the tragic conflict. He cares only for the sudden electric shock, for the final outbreak, for the catastrophe. Such a method is diametrically opposed to the "Zustandsschilderung" (portraiture of the situation) of the naturalists.<sup>3</sup> If it cannot be said that there is development of action and of characters in Ibsen's dramas, neither can it be said, on the other hand, that there is "Zustandsschilderung." At any rate, there is reproduction of conditions at the point of explosion. It is true that the drama of Ibsen, like that of Hauptmann, consists chiefly of dialogue. But in Ibsen's case the dialogue is carried on at a critical point, so that no development of action is needed; and in spite of this lack of dramatic development the drama is interesting because it stands at the point of explosion. We can hardly call this a "Zustand," a condition.

The representation of conditions shows itself in Hauptmann especially in the broad painting of the milieu. The prominence that is given to the milieu at the expense of the characters is undramatic, because in a drama we need action and acting personalities. It is foreign to the spirit of the drama, although it is not foreign to the spirit of the novel. Zola, for

<sup>1</sup>Cf. his preface to *Die Braut von Messina*, entitled: "Über den Gebrauch des Chors in der Tragödie."

<sup>2</sup>Rich. M. Meyer calls this type of drama "das Drama des reifen Zustandes" (in his "Litteraturgeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts." Berlin. 1900. Pp. 833 seq.).

<sup>3</sup>I do not consider here the first three dramas of Hauptmann, which are influenced by Ibsen.

instance, does not come into conflict with the established technic of the novel. Therefore his novels are interesting and entertaining even for one who does not care for naturalism. There are, to be sure, broad portrayals of the milieu in his novels, but in the essential points the old technic is retained. In the old novel, as in the modern naturalistic novel of Zola, the situations make the characters. The only difference is that in the old novel the situations were freely invented and not based upon reality, whereas in the modern naturalistic novel the situations are based upon strictly scientific observation; the milieu here forms the situations.

But in a drama the characters themselves are of much greater prominence and importance. In a good drama we cannot say that the situations make the characters. A "milieu-drama" is, therefore, strictly speaking, a contradiction in terms, because we can have no action and development of characters in it. In such a drama there can be shown only the effect of the milieu upon the character; the character itself remains passive. The very idea of a "milieu-drama" is anti-dramatic. In a drama the characters have a primary position. Dramatic action ought to start within the characters. If Scribe or Sardou is adversely criticised for making his characters entirely the puppets of his situations, the naturalistic dramatist may just as well be condemned for making them entirely dependent upon the milieu. One of the fundamental principles of dramatic art is violated in both cases.

Another technical defect is that we can have no completed whole in the naturalistic drama, since naturalism is an attempt to imitate and reproduce reality as faithfully as possible. We can therefore have no organic whole, but only a piece of reality; because in the short time over which the drama extends there can hardly be an action of any account.<sup>2</sup> If any important action were to be reproduced, such an extension would be

<sup>1</sup> Cf. on this whole argument Lessing's *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, 33. Stück, p. 323, in his "Sämtliche Schriften," hrsg. von Karl Lachmann. Stuttgart. 1893, 9. Bd.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. P. Mahn: *G. Hauptmann und der moderne Realismus*. Berlin. 1894. Pp. 22 seq.

required as is impossible within the scope of an ordinary drama. [In fact, action cannot be reproduced at all, since it implies consecutiveness, and consecutiveness cannot be seen. So the naturalist cannot give us a coherent totality, a completed whole.] He can only devote his attention to one piece of reality and reproduce it as closely as possible, then to another and so on, and then put them together. We can have here no organic whole.<sup>1</sup> It is piecemeal work.<sup>2</sup> If the naturalist wishes to imitate reality closely, he must direct his attention to small unimportant sections of it. Here is to be seen the difference between Ibsen and the naturalists. Ibsen is anything but a miniature painter. He does not imitate and reproduce reality indiscriminately. He condenses, he intensifies, he selects. He possesses strength of concentration. Not so the German naturalists, such as Holz, Schlaf and Hauptmann.

Another characteristic of the naturalistic drama in regard to its technic is the constant employment of dialogue.<sup>3</sup> Hauptmann uses dialogue almost constantly because it most nearly approaches exact imitation. An action cannot be reproduced on the stage exactly as in reality. That would be not only ridiculous, but also impossible. But we can have conversations as real and natural as those that are carried on in real life. The Greeks had also very little or no action in their tragedies, but for other reasons. So they made frequent use of messengers who told of events, and also of the monologue. The naturalist rejects the monologue because it is unreal, and for messengers he has no use in his plays. But when I say that Hauptmann makes frequent use of the dialogue this must not be understood as if he used it as a means of telling us something through the characters. His characters speak for themselves, they are natural. Everything seems to follow and proceed unintentionally. But at the same time it cannot be

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. Landsberg: *Los von Hauptmann*. Berlin. 1900, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. in opposition to this Aristotle's *Poetics*, Ch. VIII.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. P. Schlenther: *G. Hauptmann*. Berlin. 1898. Schlenther calls Hauptmann "den unerreichten Meister des Prosadialogs."

denied that when there is only dialogue we cannot have any regular dramatic technic and development, and dramatic heightening. The dramatist can give us only a series of dialogues carried on by different persons in succession.]

We have now, in the second place, to consider the influence of Hauptmann's mechanical conception of life and man upon the drama in its internal aspect. Here also we see that in accordance with the mechanical presuppositions of Hauptmann's view of life there can be no development and action in the naturalistic drama. Action has been regarded hitherto as an essential requirement of a drama. But if a man is entirely determined by external influences, his personal actions are of no account whatever. X

[If a man is the mechanical product of the milieu, there can be no free will; but if there is no human will of any account there can be no clash between character and fate or between character and character; there can be no heightening of the dramatic action to a conflict. Determinism is, as we have seen, an essential factor in the naturalist's conception of the world, because only with the belief in determinism can the conception of individual force, personal initiative, and personal responsibility be denied. As there is no personal responsibility present, we can also have no tragic guilt.<sup>1</sup> X

On this account there can also be no tragic necessity and inevitability in the drama.<sup>2</sup> In dramas like "Vor Sonnenaufgang," "Das Friedensfest," or "Einsame Menschen," the persons are the products and victims of their milieu, and therefore they must perish. Hence in a certain sense we may call these dramas tragedies. But do we really find here genuine tragic inevitability, such as we find in the Greek tragedies? If these persons are nothing but machines, if they are merely the products of their milieu, there is no genuine tragic element in them. Tragic necessity and inevitability cannot be attained by the representation of physical diseases. A pathological motive is too narrow and accidental for that. X

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Mahn: *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. Bartels: *op. cit.*, pp. 70 seq., also p. 123.

On this account Hauptmann's characters arouse no genuine tragic pity. They are not human enough for that. How can we feel any tragic pity for products of the milieu, for mechanical beings? Although the characters in a Greek tragedy are also the victims of an inevitable fate, there is at least a genuine trait of humanity in them, so that we may pity them. A naturalistic drama will not arouse any genuine tragic pity, because its characters are not free to act and therefore do not possess any individual responsibility.

The fall and the catastrophe in the ancient tragedy were ethically and psychologically caused and developed, but the fall and the catastrophe in the naturalistic drama are due to mechanical causes that lie outside of the sphere of human ethics and psychology.

Ibsen's characters, on the other hand, do not perish because of weakness; they perish because fate or Ibsen wills it so. In this way we get genuine tragedies. There must be a reconciliation of the character with his fate, he must die gladly and willingly. Only in this way can our gloomy troubled feeling be changed into calmness. This *katharsis*, as Aristotle calls it, is lacking in Hauptmann's dramas. He is not able to relieve and purify our oppressive feeling at the end. Ibsen's tragedies are much more nearly related to the genuine tragedies of the Greeks. This is because Ibsen is a greater personality, a man of a mightier force and will. Ibsen's subject-matter and its treatment are for this reason seldom ugly and distasteful. What would be ugly and distasteful in a smaller man becomes awful and grand in Ibsen. The lack of beauty and sunshine in his dramas is not narrowness, as it would appear to be in the works of smaller men. There is a grand sweep in his dramas.

But even Ibsen's dramas will not always stand the test of genuine tragic inevitability. "Ghosts" is considered as one of his best dramas. But here the tragic inevitability has not been attained by any high dramatic means.<sup>1</sup> That a young man

<sup>1</sup> Ibsen's "Ghosts" has been chosen for criticism because it is typical in its defects, and the same criticism applies to many of Hauptmann's dramas.

must die of a certain deadly disease is hardly a tragic inevitability. It is too accidental for that.<sup>1</sup> The tragedy hinges upon a physical disease. Such a physical disease, even if it be generalized to a hereditary law, lacks the universality and necessity of human nature. No genuine pity can arise from it, because in a tragedy we can only pity that which we ourselves feel. But we cannot feel in us what is not universally inherent in human nature. A physical disease such as that of Oswald is not a universal trait of humanity. The typicalness of a character cannot be attained by an accidental physical disease. It is no fault of a dramatist if he depicts local and narrow characters; but in spite of such strong individuality of characterization we must be able to see the typical in them. No one, however, can consider Oswald as a type. So the highly praised inevitability which some find in this drama seems to me, on the contrary, narrowness.

From this lack of tragic inevitability, the fact also follows that there is no universality, considered from the artistic point of view, in the naturalistic drama.<sup>2</sup> The naturalist does not believe in soul, in that psychological element in the individual man which unites him with general humanity. He does not believe in a humanity apart from individual physiological beings. Outside of these individual men he believes only in abstract laws pertaining to man not as man, but as animal. The universality he believes in is the endless chain of physical and physiological heredity. But this is not the sort of universality that is needed in a drama. In art we need the genuinely and purely human element stripped of all accidentalities such as physical heredity. If this purely human element is lacking, there will also be lacking genuine tragic inevitability. A tragedy must, of course, contain sufferings, but they must be sufferings pertaining to humanity in its necessary and universal aspect. In Job there is a suffering common to all humanity; likewise in King Lear, in Hamlet, in Othello, etc.;

<sup>1</sup> On tragic necessity and inevitability cf. Aristotle's Poetics, Ch. XV.

<sup>2</sup> On tragic universality cf. Aristotle, *op. cit.*, Ch. IX., and A. Bartels, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

but a case like Ibsen's Oswald is pathological and hence abnormal.<sup>1</sup>

Thus far we have discussed the influence of Hauptmann's mechanical conception of life and man upon the technic of the drama and upon the development and action of the drama in its internal aspect. But the influence of this view of the world upon the characters is even more important, especially to our modern minds. We enjoy many dramas without interesting plot and development and action, especially those of Goethe; but we do not like to miss the psychological development of the characters; we like to see the inner workings of the soul. But Hauptmann depicts only the external characteristics of his characters; we do not find in his dramas any characterization from the psychological point of view. He is a careful observer of the details of real life. He has observed things here and there in real life; he reproduces them carefully and puts them together. It is in the nature of his work that there can be no dramatic development. Because he can paint only the external characteristics of his characters, he cannot develop them psychologically; they are stationary. Adalbert von Hanstein says on this point, in connection with two early plays of Hauptmann which have not been published, one entitled "Tiberius" and the other "Römer und Germanen":

"Beide Arbeiten zeigten den echten Charakter der Hauptmannschen Phantasie, den Bildhauercharakter. Die Personen waren alle in einzelnen Situationen unendlich scharf gesehen, aber immer nur in Situationen. Die Entwicklung fehlte. Es waren plastische, ruhende Gestalten, und noch bis heute hat Hauptmann diese Mängel seiner Phantasie nicht überwinden können. Er sieht immer nur Situationen, nie Entwicklungen. Diese bestrebte er sich möglichst scharf auszumalen. So führte er mich einmal in das Museum vor ein Werk seines römischen Lehrers, das die vollendete Statue eines Menschen darstellt. Man glaubt den Marmor atmen zu sehen, aber der Mensch ist nicht nur in keiner 'Pose,' sondern auch in keiner Thätigkeit, ja nicht einmal mit einem bestimmten Ausdruck

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Mahn: *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

ausgestattet. 'Sehr lebenswahr,' sagte ich, 'aber was *thut* dieser Mensch?'—'Nichts, er ist ein Mensch.'"<sup>1</sup>

Hauptmann has drawn real characters, but this fact is not due to any insight into human nature. In spite of his accurate observation, Hauptmann does not know anything of the inner reality of man.<sup>2</sup> He observes all the external details and puts them together so artistically that his characters impress us as real. He works like a painter or a sculptor. He must have his models in the world of common reality. He has no specific capacity to draw human characters and to bring out the essentially human in them. Man is to Hauptmann, as to every naturalist, a mere natural object. He can reproduce any other object of nature as really and truly after careful observation. He is no psychologist.<sup>3</sup> Take, for instance, Fuhrmann Henschel.<sup>4</sup> That character gives us an overwhelming impression of reality. And yet, in the drama, we do not find any inner development of his character. Hauptmann has paid no attention to his psychological make-up, he does not represent any soul battles of the unhappy man. Why, then, is this character so true to life in spite of that? Because Hauptmann has carefully put together all the external details that make up the life of such a man. He may have had a simple model before him, or, perhaps, more than one model, just as a sculptor sometimes gets a nose from one man and a mouth from another. But wherever he gets his different parts, they must be carefully observed from life. Psychological intuition must play no part in the process.

x  
disque  
Henschel

<sup>1</sup>A. von Hanstein: Gerhart Hauptmann. Eine Skizze. Leipzig. 1898. P. 10.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Hamann says on this point in his article: Gerhart Hauptmann und sein Naturalismus, in *Die Gesellschaft*. Jahrg. 16, pp. 73-83: "Den Mangel an intuitiv verknüpfender Phantasie hat er selbst (namely Hauptmann) zugegeben. Er sagte einmal von sich, dass er seine Charaktere nicht genial kombinierend, einheitlich schaue, sondern die einzelnen Züge der Wirklichkeit entnehme und dann mosaikartig zusammensetze."

<sup>3</sup>Cf. A. Bartels: *op. cit.*, pp. 248 seq. Also H. Landsberg: Los von Hauptmann! Berlin. 1900. Pp. 64 seq.

<sup>4</sup>Neunte Auflage. Berlin. 1899.



✓ It is evident that Hauptmann in this way can get typical men, typical in so far as they possess the common external traits of their class, but he cannot strike the individual note in his characters. He lacks, as we have seen, the psychological ability necessary to accomplish this. His characters, when they are very good, for instance, the different weavers in "Die Weber," or coachman Henschel, are class types,<sup>1</sup> but never individuals. This is a deep-rooted defect of naturalism.

Or take "Das Friedensfest." Here we know the characters only from their external pathological side.<sup>2</sup> Hauptmann has taken pains to give us full and extensive notes in this respect. But he does not show us what is really behind these pathological appearances, that is to say, the persons considered from a purely human standpoint. What kind of men or women are these characters independently of their nervous conditions? That is what we ought to feel: their heart, their spirit, their moral kernel. Only in such a way could the drama have any genuine interest for us. It ought to stand upon a purely human basis. Development, conflict, clash, catastrophe—everything ought to proceed out of genuine human relations.

*we get this in Elsinore*  
The real life of characters comes from their inner kernel, and not from their appearances, however vivid; and, moreover, how does Hauptmann get these vivid appearances? Sometimes he has to use almost a whole page of notes. If he were a psychologist, one intuitive look into the soul of his characters would suffice to show how they would behave and act in any attitude and under any circumstances, and then we should immediately know what the character really is. Here is to be found the vast difference between Shakspeare's art and Hauptmann's, between genuine realism and naturalism.

For the production of real and living characters, power of plastic formation is needed, and that Hauptmann does not possess. His characters are pictures. Whatever can be shown

<sup>1</sup> Cf. U. C. Wörner: G. Hauptmann. In: Forschungen zur neueren Litteraturgeschichte, pt. 4. München. 1897. P. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. P. Mahn: *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

by way of painting he shows: all the fine nuances of color and tone. But his representation always remains one-sided.<sup>1</sup> It is on this account that there are no real human passions displayed in Hauptmann's plays. false

In the play "Einsame Menschen" we find the same defect. We cannot censure Johannes Vockerat because he does not reach his aim. A dramatist has a perfect right to treat a problematic nature. But Hauptmann, not being a psychologist, cannot show that Johannes is indeed a problematic nature. He does not show that Johannes has really some higher aims and that he takes pain to attain them.<sup>2</sup> This problem is beyond Hauptmann's ken. When a dramatist knows his characters only from their appearance, he can, of course, not treat a problematic nature. A problematic nature will always show itself at a disadvantage if looked upon from the outside. Its whole value lies within, in its inner striving, which Hauptmann has not represented and developed because he has not seen it. nature

As long as a naturalist keeps to commonplace men and women, to the people of the masses, there will be no conflict between subject matter and method of treatment; because such characters need only be depicted in their external characteristics, as they do not present any deeper psychological problems. But where he attempts to treat a higher character, a character with some depth of nature and an individual note, as, for instance, a problematic nature like that of Johannes Vockerat or Wilhelm Scholz, his naturalistic method will prove unsatisfactory, because it is not sufficient to paint such a character simply from observation of details.

In "Die Weber" we find a similar defect in the second act. Here it is shown admirably how the old Baumert changes from an humble timid creature to a rebel. But the change is shown only in its external, physiological bearing. Not the smallest part in the chain of physiological causes and effects

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bartels: *op. cit.*, p. 205: "Das ist ja überhaupt die alte Schwäche Hauptmanns. Wir sehen seine Menschen zu sehr immer von einer Seite, ja nur nach der Oberfläche, nichts ist genug von innen heraus entwickelt."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. U. C. Wörner: *op. cit.*, p. 22.

is omitted; ~~but the transformation is not shown psychologically.~~ It appears rather as ~~the effect of strong drink and fried meat~~ to which the poor, miserable weavers had not been used ~~for such a long time.~~ It is their excited condition afterwards that changes them into rebels. These weavers are not heroes, they are mechanical products of the milieu. They have to obey the laws of determinism. For everything the physiological causes and effects are accurately given. The whole drama is, from one point of view at least, a machine.

In "College Crampton," again, we find the same defect. Since Hauptmann does not treat his characters psychologically, we never know what they really are. We ask ourselves in vain: Is "College" Crampton really a genius, or is he only a brawler? Hauptmann evidently does not know this himself. He cannot develop his characters. If he had been a psychologist, he might have shown how Crampton gradually sank lower and lower from a high and distinguished position and how his genius was gradually ruined. But as he can show him only at one stage of his life, we do not see any whence and whither. It is an idle question to ask at the end whether Crampton will become happy or not, because Hauptmann has not revealed his inner character. We know him only as he looks and behaves at a certain stage.

However, while in dramatic characters like Johannes Vockerat we find this lack of individualization and psychological penetration to be a defect, it is not a defect in "Fuhrmann Henschel," because Henschel is not an extraordinary character. He is simply a common man about whose inner nature we do not care very much. It is perfectly conceivable that such a character be treated according to the standards of naturalistic art, because he is a pure product of the milieu. It is true we have found that those of Hauptmann's dramas in which he treats individuals are usually defective. But this fault does not lie so much in the naturalistic method as in Hauptmann's choice of characters, the treatment of which lies beyond his sphere, for instance, Johannes Vockerat. If he wishes to treat an individual according to the naturalistic method, the character must be a pure product of the milieu

like Fuhrmann Henschel, it must be a typical character. Whenever he attempts to treat an individual character like Johannes Vöckerat, or Wilhelm Scholz, or College Crampton, whose essential element consists not in its being typical or in being a pure product of the milieu, but in its individuality and in its personal note, then his powers are exhausted after the first or second act, because, being no psychologist, he cannot penetrate individual souls.<sup>1</sup> He can only gather the external traits that his individual character shares with his class. This ability of Hauptmann cannot, of course, be considered as art in the highest sense, but it has a perfect right to exist as a minor species of art.<sup>2</sup>

So far we have considered peculiarities or defects arising from Hauptmann's mechanical or materialistic conception of life and man. We have considered his mechanical conception of life, in its influence upon his technic, upon the drama in its internal aspect, and upon the characters.

We have in the second place to consider the peculiarities or defects arising from his socialistic conception of life and man. There is, of course, an intimate connection between the two.

## § 2. *Dramaturgic Defects Arising from Hauptmann's Socialistic Conception of Life and Man.*

As man is held to be only a mechanical product of the milieu, he is also considered only a link in the chain of social phenomena. Consequently, the same dramaturgic defects which are the consequence of Hauptmann's mechanical view of life appear again in this connection. Hence we cannot expect here, any more than in the former case, any strong acting personalities, nor any genuine dramatic action, any tragic guilt, tragic conflict, tragic inevitability; in fact any of those qualities that gave to the classical drama its characteristic stamp.

Hauptmann's *dramatis personæ* are victims of social conditions. He wishes to show men, not as they act, but as they

<sup>1</sup>Cf. A. Bartels, *op. cit.*, p. 125, on the contrast between class type and individuality.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 122-123, and other passages.

are acted upon, as they suffer under social conditions. He is prompted by social pity.<sup>1</sup> On this account he represents common men and weak characters. Fuhrmann Henschel, for instance, is a suffering man, a victim of his milieu. Hauptmann, as a naturalist, wishes to show how the average man in Henschel's condition would behave. If he were to make any heroic efforts to arouse himself and free himself from his conditions, he would not be the coachman that Hauptmann has intended; he would not be the average man. Hauptmann, as a naturalist and as prompted by his social pity, wishes to show the common, ordinary conditions. He wishes to show the rules and not the exceptions. Society is made up, not of exceptions, but of average men, and Hauptmann, being essentially a social poet, wishes to represent the average man. He wishes to reveal the truth about modern social conditions by representing man in his ordinary state. If we took an abstract point of view, we might say that this coachman is, in spite of his sufferings, a despicable character, because he ought to arouse himself under any circumstances, no matter how unfavorable the conditions might be. But, as a matter of fact, we know that it is impossible for him to arouse himself under the actual conditions. Hauptmann, as a naturalist, does not wish to show what man ought to do but what he actually does. The method of the naturalist is experimental and conditioned by time and circumstances. But while all this is an explanation of Hauptmann's procedure, it is no justification of it from the standpoint of higher art.<sup>2</sup> For, by such a method of procedure, the artist attains neither artistic necessity nor that artistic universality which Aristotle, Lessing, and all other critics of art have considered as essential.

It is owing to this socialistic conception of life that Hauptmann treats his characters from a narrowly economic standpoint. The Greek tragedy is concerned about universally human faults. The hero could not but sin because sin was inherent in him as a man. In the modern naturalistic drama it is different. Here special social and economic miseries of

<sup>1</sup>Cf. P. Schlenther: G. Hauptmann. Berlin. 1898. P. 237.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. A. Bartels: *op. cit.*, p. 127.

individuals or classes are treated, without the psychological reaction of the persons concerned. In the classical tragedy the course of tragic events was inevitable, because of an inexorable fate impending over them. In the modern naturalistic tragedies the course of events depends altogether upon the arbitrariness and pettiness of certain individuals afflicted with sorrows and shortcomings so petty and arbitrary that they do not in the least touch the genuine core of humanity. Now, it has never been the purpose of art to show man in abnormal conditions, even if such abnormalities comprised whole classes. There can never be an art of socialism, if by socialism we understand a special class of men: the fourth estate, the poor as contrasted with the rich. Such division destroys the essence of art, which deals with universal man, with man as a personality without regard to anything else. In so far as the modern naturalists pretend to be the spokesmen of the fourth estate, they are not genuine artists. The fundamental elements of humanity that are needed by the artist are not confined to special classes, and the artist who narrows himself in that way, transgresses the principles of genuine art. It may be that the poor at the present time are afflicted with special cares and sorrows which have never been felt hitherto in such a high degree. But as these cares and sorrows do not belong to man necessarily and universally, the artist cannot use them as such for dramatic material.

Hauptmann's art is essentially democratic, while Greek art was aristocratic. So the emotions aroused in us are essentially different. "Die Weber," for instance, might be called a tragedy since it awakens sympathy and pity in us. But it is quite a different conception of sympathy and pity that we have here. In the Greek tragedy pity arises from the fact that we see ourselves in the suffering hero. This pity is egoistic. But in a drama like "Die Weber" pity arises from an altruistic and socialistic feeling. Here it is Christian sympathy with human imperfections.

But if we leave out of account questions of higher dramatic art, it must be confessed that Hauptmann has achieved his best in the social or mass drama, because here he has had an

opportunity to depict the "common man." The "common man" does not present individual soul problems. We have seen that Hauptmann cannot draw individual men, but that he can produce class types because here the collecting of external traits is all that is needed. I need not dwell on this point any longer, as it has already been discussed in connection with the influence of his mechanical conception of life and man upon his characters.

Now that we have discussed the dramaturgic defects arising from the mechanical and the socialistic element in Hauptmann's view of life, we have in the third place to consider the dramaturgic peculiarities and defects caused by the lyrical and musical elements in his work.

### § 3. *Dramaturgic Defects Arising from Hauptmann's Lyrico-Musical and Poetical Tendency.*

We found the chief difference between ancient or classical and modern art to lie in the plastic and the musical element. Now Hauptmann, like the German naturalists by whom he was strongly influenced, is an essentially modern poet and hence, to a certain extent, also a *décadent*. As he lacks the power of plastic formation, the effect of his dramas is not artistic, but lyrical, poetical. As he does not create from an inner life force, he cannot produce effects that reach the depths of the human heart. He is impressed by objects and beings only and hence can produce impressions only. His art is impressionistic.<sup>1</sup> The drama of Hauptmann lacks display of intellect and will power; the element of feeling, a soft passive mood, is all that is present. This is too delicate for the drama. As we found determinism in the other aspects of Hauptmann's conceptions of life, so we find here impressionism or passiveness, which after all is also a kind of determinism. In both

<sup>1</sup>Cf. on this point F. Servaes: *Praeludien. Ein Essaybuch.* Berlin. 1899. Cf. especially the essays on G. Hauptmann (pp. 126-148), on A. Holz (pp. 84-106), and on J. Schlaf (pp. 106-126). Also: R. M. Meyer: *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur im neunzehnten Jahrhundert.* Berlin. 1900. Pp. 874 seq.

cases we lack the most essential elements of a drama: human will and personal initiative.

On this account the defects caused by the mechanical and the socialistic element in Hauptmann's conception of life may also be explained as due to a certain extent to this element of decadence in his dramas. For instance, while the lack of inevitability in his tragedies is due to his mechanical way of looking at things, according to which there exists only physical necessity, it is also due to his lack of dramatic force and will power; and while his inability to draw strong active characters is due, on the one hand, to both his ~~socialistic and his mechanical~~ view of life, according to which there are no individualities, it may also be accounted for, on the other hand, by his lack of formative and plastic power and by the general weakness characteristic of decadence. While his capacity for observing the finest and smallest details is due to his keen sense of reality, to the mechanical skill of the working man from which he descended, there is also something morbid in this fine painting of details, admirable as it may be in other respects. A healthy man with a strong will and a definite aim will overlook these details, or he will condense them into essential facts. By his strong will his eye will be blinded for details. This is one of the fundamental reasons why Hauptmann is a lyrical poet rather than a dramatist. But if his unusually fine eye for the details of life, ~~his extraordinary capacity of observation, were~~ only balanced by an equal amount of energy and will, he would be a great dramatist besides being a great poet. Since these latter qualities are wanting, he lacks dramatic force. Ibsen takes his characters with a strong hand and wields them for his dramatic purposes; he is strong enough to rule his characters so as to fit them into the dramatic whole. Hauptmann's characters continually drift and shift. He possesses a fine, delicate, womanly feeling;<sup>1</sup> but Ibsen possesses, besides feeling, a strong, manly intellect.<sup>2</sup> When Hauptmann's characters perish, it is because of their own accidental weakness. Ibsen stands above his characters; they are strong,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. Landsberg: *Los von Hauptmann!* Berlin. 1900. P. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*



but Ibsen is still stronger. He identifies himself, so to speak, with their fate. He makes their fate. He himself is the fate and the god of his characters. Hauptmann is merely guided by his feeling.

We have thus far devoted our attention to the dramaturgic defects arising from naturalism in its application to the drama. But before we draw our final conclusions as to its applicability we must consider those features in Hauptmann's drama in which it chiefly excels.

#### § 4. *Virtues of the Naturalistic Drama.*

Although Hauptmann, as a naturalist, imitates and reproduces reality, he considers this only a means to an end. In this respect the following words of Anna Mahr in "Einsame Menschen" are significant: "Was man genossen hat, hat man genossen. Man muss sich begnügen. Über den Dingen liegt ein Duft, ein Hauch: das ist das Beste."<sup>1</sup> It is this fine extract from reality which attracts him most. The question of reality of characters which is usually pointed out as Hauptmann's strong side, is only secondary, since it is not the artistic element in naturalism. We have found in our investigation that Hauptmann's characters are not real in the sense of being alive, because he lacks the power of plastic formation, because his art is too one-sided. His characters are real only in the sense of being vivid, as we may call a picture or a relief vivid.

The artistic element in naturalism is the impression received from the total picture made up of details. A character does not stand out any more prominently than the other details of the milieu, he is not any more or less real than the other objects. He forms part of the whole. I am compelled here to adduce repeatedly the comparison with music, since there exists an inner relation between music and naturalism. Both are distinctively modern arts. A sound is real, but there is no artistic merit in the reality of this sound. It is only a harmonious series of sounds that has an artistic effect upon us. In naturalism the individual object counts as little as the individual sound in music.

<sup>1</sup>Gerhart Hauptmann: *Einsame Menschen*. Berlin. 1899. P. 77.

Hence the ~~tendency to symbolism~~ which we find sometimes in the naturalists and which seems so strange to us. Symbolism, which became fashionable after naturalism, is only another side of naturalism. The outlines of the characters in Hauptmann's naturalistic dramas may be sharp, their color and tone may be vivid and strong, but the impression received from the whole is soft and delicate, and it is this softness and delicacy in its immediate contact with the soul that is the artistic element in naturalism. ✓

We see that naturalism as an art is very nearly related to music, since this latter art produces similar effects by similar means. Music also touches the soul immediately, without an intervening object. It will therefore not seem so strange that a delicate, poetic, lyrically gifted soul, like Hauptmann, has become a naturalist, and it will not seem so strange that the naturalistic movement in Germany started with lyrical poetry and that a poet like Arno Holz, who had acquired fame by his lyrical poetry collected in "Das Buch der Zeit," propounded the most wooden theories of art.

In Hauptmann's naturalistic dramas we are not concerned with the action of any individual nor with his psychological development. There is, moreover, ~~no idea enforced nor are~~ any strong emotions aroused in us, since there is no display of wild passions in his dramas. Everything runs its course quietly. We receive simply an indefinite impression very similar to the indefinite impression aroused by music. Hence naturalistic art is preëminently suggestive, and hardly anything more. When we read a drama of Hauptmann we do not seem to get any thought out of it, the dramatist does not seem to say anything.<sup>1</sup> He uses only as many words as are necessary to call forth the impression intended by him. If one wishes to enrich his intellect or to be stirred in his innermost heart by dramatic passions, he must not read a drama of Hauptmann. |

Whenever Hauptmann produces this effect of totality, his dramas are good. He will be remembered, therefore, chiefly

<sup>1</sup>Cf. on this point an essay entitled: "Was wollen die Modernen?" in *Neue Zeit*. V. 121, pp. 132-140, and pp. 168-176.

✓ for "Die Weber." This is the most perfect drama of its kind, and the most characteristic drama of Hauptmann. Here we may venture to speak of a naturalistic art. Here the dramatist has broken ground for a new sphere in art, for something which the old artistic standards do not fit and which has nevertheless a right to exist: the mass drama, the drama with the common people as actors, the chorus drama so to speak, the lyrico-musical drama. The chief excellences in the naturalistic drama are color and tone, and these can be brought out satisfactorily only in the mass drama. For the representation of individuals the naturalistic drama lacks motion, development, action. For the different nuances of "Stimmung," for "atmosphere," the total mass is needed. Here Hauptmann's lyrical gift finds its best combination with his gift of observing the finest and most delicate details. Although he cannot analyze individual souls, he can transmit the impressions received from a totality, from a mass. "Die Weber" distinguishes itself chiefly by his capacity for producing the peculiar atmosphere hovering over, surrounding, and pervading the mass.

This is Hauptmann's peculiar gift. Everybody is impressed in some way by a mass of people, but very few have the capacity of transmitting this impression to others by analyzing it and observing all the small details that make it up. This is something more than slavish imitation of reality. The details by themselves may have been slavishly imitated, but the artistic element lies in the impression. It needs an extraordinary refinement and sensitive responsiveness to outward stimuli to see and be impressed by seeing like Hauptmann. It is a gift especially rare among Germans. The German poet has usually a deep insight into human character, but he has no receptivity for the stimuli of the external world. Hence he loses in breadth and expansion what he gains in depth.

We cannot say, therefore, that Hauptmann's naturalism is merely a slavish imitation of reality. It is true that he is not at all concerned with the transcendental world of art as Schiller conceived it. He looks at the "common world";

but he does not look at it with the eye of the "common man," he looks at it with the eye of a receptive poet. He does not idealize the world like Schiller, but his receptive capacities let him see this "common world" in a different light. As his vision is finer and more delicate than that of the "common man," the impression that he receives from the common world, the "atmosphere," is also finer and more delicate.

§ 5. *Relation of the Naturalistic Drama to the Stage and the Actors.*

It remains for us now to consider Hauptmann's naturalistic drama in its relation to the stage and to the actors.<sup>1</sup> In our investigation of the drama of Hauptmann thus far, we have found little specifically dramaturgic merit in it. Hauptmann has no peculiar gifts for the drama, like, for instance, Schiller or Sudermann. The reason why he succeeded while others did not succeed, is not because he was superior to them from the dramaturgic and technical standpoint, but rather because he possessed superior talents for the work peculiar to the "exact," or "consistent," realists. But that mode of work will hardly ever lend itself to the acted drama. It is the most unfavorable method for a dramatic production. That delicate, fleeting, ephemeral "Stimmung" which we found to be the essential element of Hauptmann's drama, is not solid enough for an acted drama. The theatre is the least suitable place for such gentle and delicate moods. People will not be able to recognize and appreciate the peculiar value in the work of a naturalist, and least of all will they be able to appreciate it in the theatre, where they expect strong emotions and powerful effects.

However much Hauptmann's dramas may have been praised on account of the naturalistic art revealed in them, they have had, on the whole, no genuine stage success. This

<sup>1</sup>Cf. on this point O. Brahm: *Der Naturalismus und das Theater*. Westermann's *Illustrierte Deutsche Monatshefte* 70, pp. 489-99 (1891). Also: A. Freiherr von Berger: *Studien und Kritiken*. Wien. 1896. Pp. 258-70. ("Über Schauspielkunst.") Also: A. Lasson: *Realismus und Idealismus in der Kunst*. Philosophische Vorträge, Neue Folge, Heft 22-23, p. 6. (Leipzig. 1892.)

is only natural. It is impossible to require an actor to bring out sentiments and passions which he does not feel. Actors do not necessarily come from the ranks of that particular class which Hauptmann treats. The drama must stand upon a universally and genuinely human basis. Only in this way can an actor be touched by it, and the magnetic touch of the actor transmit itself to the audience. It cannot be urged against the naturalists that they treat in their dramas men of lower spheres; but it must be urged against them that they treat them from a narrowly economic and physiological standpoint. If they would treat them psychologically, they would detect the universally human element in them. From an external point of view there may be classes in society; but psychologically we are all related to each other.

Hauptmann sometimes uses almost a whole page of notes to explain and describe to us the external characteristics and attitudes of his people. If he could by a momentary glance intuitively penetrate the inner situation, all this would be unnecessary. All those long notes might be valuable for a novel, but they cannot be brought out advantageously on the stage. So the naturalistic drama is after all a closet drama. The long stage directions are much too cumbersome for the actor. An actor can never be altogether an imitator. It is impossible for him to obliterate all his individual traits. If he is a genius, he will have his own way of acting. There are consequently no possibilities for becoming a great actor in the naturalistic drama. The best dramas are those which the actor himself has to interpret by his own acting. A drama before it is played is only a potential drama. But Hauptmann's plays are ready to the smallest details before they are acted. What need is there then of reproducing them on the stage, since actors must necessarily spoil the original impression?

## CHAPTER IV.

### CONCLUSION.

#### *Résumé.*

After stating the meaning of naturalism in its modern signification and comparing it with realism and idealism, we have considered its origins, its causes, and its characteristics, first in the land of its origin. We have considered these characteristics of naturalism first in their formal aspect and found that the distinction between nature and art was obliterated by the naturalists. Art, as we saw, tended to become natural science. We have considered these characteristics secondly in their material aspect and found the following to be the determining factors of naturalism:

1) the law of heredity, 2) determinism, 3) the doctrine of the milieu, 4) the doctrine that man is only an animal, 5) the doctrine that man is only a link in the chain of social phenomena.

We have further shown the transition of naturalism to Germany and its historical development in that country. We have seen how it partly changed there. These changes refer more particularly to the attempt to be more consistent than Zola. We find them

- 1) in the technic,
- 2) in the stress laid upon the influence of objective nature upon the subjectivity of the poet,
- 3) in "Kleinmalerei" and "Stimmungsmalerei."

Besides this, we had to look for an additional cause to account for the peculiar development of naturalism in Germany and found it in "decadence."

After trying to establish the psychological basis of this "decadence," we found that it shows itself

- 1) as sentimentalism (in the sense of Schiller),

- 2) in its tendency to become extreme subjectivism,
- 3) in its combination with lyricism.

On account of this additional element of "decadence" we found that this new literary movement is not merely naturalistic in the narrower sense, but specifically modern. For this reason we contrasted naturalism as a specifically modern art with classic art. We found the main distinction between naturalism and classic art to consist in the absence of the plastic element in the former.

1) Classic art was plastic, modern art is musical or lyrico-musical.

2) Classic art was individualistic, modern art strives to produce total effects.

On this account we found the following defects in naturalism:

- 1) lack of plasticity, solidity and strength,
- 2) lack of power of individualization and concentration,
- 3) lack of the idea of personality.

On the other hand, we found some redeeming features in modern naturalistic art, such as the lyrico-musical element, the artistic impression of total effects, harmony, symmetry.

After that we investigated naturalism in its application to the drama by Hauptmann.

We considered

1) the dramaturgic defects arising from his mechanical conception of life and man.

We considered the influence of this mechanical conception of life and man 1) upon the technic of the drama, 2) upon the drama in its internal aspect, and 3) upon the characters.

We considered

2) the dramaturgic defects arising from his socialistic conception of life and man,

3) the dramaturgic defects arising from his lyrico-musical and poetical tendency.

After we had treated these defects, we considered those features in the naturalistic drama in which it chiefly excels, such as the lyrico-musical element in relation to the mass drama, the capacity of observing the finest and minutest details, the

ability to draw the common man (class type). But as we found that these redeeming features were not of a specifically dramaturgic and theatrical value, we saw that they could not balance the defects.

Finally, we considered the naturalistic drama in its relation to the stage and the actors.

### *Results.*

Hitherto critics have found fault with Hauptmann for drawing weak characters, for neglecting action or psychological development of characters, or for neglecting other dramaturgic principles, supposing that these things might be avoided. Others again have tried to defend Hauptmann on these points by quoting whatever they could find of action or of other established dramaturgic principles. We have shown that from the presuppositions of naturalism these dramaturgic principles cannot be present. All these defects in Hauptmann's dramaturgic art may be traced back to a few primary sources.

As our investigation has shown that Hauptmann has overthrown the æsthetic rules of the drama, the next question is: Has the naturalistic dramatist substituted any new dramaturgic principles for the old? We have failed to find any; for the excellent points by which naturalistic art distinguishes itself are, as we have seen, not of a specifically dramaturgic nature. Capacity for accurate and detailed observation and for producing delicate local atmosphere and delicate "Stimmung" do not by themselves make a drama, although they are valuable acquisitions for a dramatist. They are only a means to an end.



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II. MAGAZINE ARTICLES.<sup>1</sup>*Abbreviations.*

- B L U = Blätter für litterarische Unterhaltung.
- D R = Deutsche Revue.
- D Rs = Deutsche Rundschau.
- Fr B = Freie Bühne.
- Ges = Die Gesellschaft.
- Grenzb. = Die Grenzboten.
- Kw = Kunstwart.
- M L = Magazin für Litteratur.
- M L I A = Magazin für Litteratur des In- und Auslandes (continuation of the preceding).
- Nation <sup>B</sup> = Nation, Berlin.
- Nat. Zg. = National Zeitung.
- N Z = Neue Zeit.
- Z B K = Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst.
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Chronological list of Hauptmann's dramas.

Vor Sonnenaufgang.....	1889
Das Friedensfest.....	1890
Einsame Menschen.....	1891
Die Weber.....	1892
College Crampton.....	1892
Der Biberpelz.....	1893

Hannele .....	1893
Hannele's Himmelfahrt.....	1896
Florian Geyer.....	1896
Die versunkene Glocke.....	1896
Fuhrmann Henschel.....	1897
Schluck und Jau.....	1899
Michael Kramer.....	1900
Der rote Hahn.....	1901
Der arme Heinrich.....	1903

## VITA.

The author was born in Greussen, Thuringia, Germany, May 21, 1875. He was educated first at the *Bürgerschule* of that place and afterwards at the *Gymnasium* in Sondershausen. In 1891 he emigrated to America with his parents. From 1893-1896 he studied theology at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. At the same time he became also a special student of the University of Pennsylvania, devoting himself chiefly to the study of philosophy under Prof. G. L. Fullerton. In 1895 he was matriculated as a regular student in the Department of Semitic Languages in the same University, taking Assyriology under Prof. H. V. Hilprecht as his "major subject" and kindred subjects under Prof. M. Jastrow. He continued these studies under Prof. R. Gottheil at Columbia University, pursuing at the same time studies in Sanskrit and Persian under Prof. A. V. W. Jackson and Dr. A. Yohannan. He took up his Germanic studies in 1899 under Professors Calvin Thomas and W. H. Carpenter. As "minor subjects" he selected courses in English poetry under Prof. T. R. Price and on the drama under Prof. Brander Matthews. In 1900 he received the degree of A. M. from Columbia University.







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